

We are all on this Earth together. It is a wonderful planet, but we have to start accepting that it is also a largely closed system with limited resources. We are on the precipice of a climate disaster for future generations, and if we want our children to have a future that isn't wracked in turmoil, **WE NEED BOLD CLIMATE ACTION NOW**. We cannot work against the mandate to reduce overall vehicle-miles driven; and to invest billions of dollars in a freeway expansion over the Rose Quarter and the Columbia River is to spit in the faces of not only this mandate but in the faces of future Americans.

Induced demand will ensure that these expansions will succumb to traffic jams within the decade anyways, as has been shown time and time again. Stop the insanity and start investing in public transit, high-speed rail, and pedestrian safety over "one more lane".

Expanding public transit is not only the most sustainable option for our climate, it is also the most economically beneficial one in a broad sense. Trimet was a life-saver for me, who came from a lower-middle class family and did not have a car until they turned 26. Trimet allowed me to travel across the metro area and pursue a higher education. Last Friday we got to hear folks from all walks of life provide public testimony, many of them echoed similar sentiments: Having access to Trimet, whether it be public or paratransit, enabled and empowered them to go to school, work, the grocery store, and overall be able to live their lives. Vehicle ownership is a massive expense that can cripple a tight budget, and with so many Americans living paycheck-to-paycheck as it stands, we need to consider options that can empower more people than it can cars. Class mobility is what provides people freedom, and by enabling the lower and middle classes, the elderly and disabled, with public transit options, we go much further towards providing people the freedoms they deserve than shackling them to a car would.

Joseph van Kleeck